

Refugee voices

Author: Barry van Driel

THEME

Amplifying the voices of refugees, then and now, using internet research.

GOALS

- Amplifying the voices of refugees
- Promoting understanding of what motivates refugees to leave their places of residence and take the difficult step of moving elsewhere
- Raising awareness of how refugees experience being a refugee
- Creating empathy

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students/participants understand the commonalities of refugee experiences but also differences, both past and present
- Students/participants gain a better understanding of how refugees experience the world around them

METHODOLOGY

- On-line research
- Reflecting on narratives
- Individual work, small group work and presentations

MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- Laptops with internet access
- Whiteboard, blackboard or flipchart paper

Overview of activities (process)

Duration: 90 minutes

PART 1

Group brainstorm plus film: 15-20 minutes

The teacher/educator starts the class/group with a brief question with the class:

1. When you hear the word 'Refugee', what is the first thing that comes to your mind? The teacher/educator places the responses in a central space, visible for everyone. The teacher/educator then reads the definition of what a refugee is. For instance here: <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>
2. The teacher/educator shows the Just Now movie: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5fnRd2_gB4&t=33s
3. This is followed by the question: Can you think of conflicts that have produced refugees. Again, the responses are collected in a central place that is visible for everyone.
4. The teacher/educator summarizes the responses. It is recommended that European teachers/educators to at least mention the Holocaust, the conflict in the Balkans and a present conflict (e.g. Syria or the Ukraine).

Refugee experiences: 20 minutes

1. The teacher/educator selects the conflict that she/he/they is most familiar with. (Optional – the teacher/educator shows a short film about this conflict to set the context)
2. The teacher/educator divides the group/class into subgroups of 4 or 5. Each subgroup gets an assignment (this can be in physical breakout rooms or on-line):
 - Subgroup 1 focuses on challenges and gets the instruction: think of the many challenges that a young refugee escaping this conflict might have. Do this as a brainstorm and try to arrive at at least 5 challenges.
 - Subgroup 2 focuses on dreams and aspirations and gets the instruction: think of the many dreams and aspirations a young refugee escaping this conflict might have. Do this as a brainstorm. Also, how refugees cope with being in a new, unknown place.
 - Subgroup 3 focuses on fears and gets the instruction: think of the fears that a young refugee escaping this conflict might have. Do this as a brainstorm.
3. Each subgroup presents its list for 1-3 minutes
4. The teacher/educator debriefs and explains that as a next step they will be conducting research.

PART 2: 45 MINUTES

Research: 25 minutes

The students/participants are placed in groups of 4, with two laptops per subgroup. The task of each subgroup is to find 2 short video (or written if internet too slow) testimonies (no longer than 5 minutes) from one of the conflicts they mentioned on Day 1. The teacher/educator helps with a few search terms and a few general sites. For each of the testimonies, they try to identify (if present):

- The person's challenges
- The person's hope and aspirations
- The person's fears

Presentations: 15 minutes

Each subgroup presents its findings for 2-3 minutes

Debrief: 10 minutes

***** Warning *****

Some testimonies can evoke strong emotions and have strong images embedded into the testimonies. Some teachers/educators may choose to create a pool of short film testimonies and assign them to the students/participants.

Some search terms (in English):

- Refugee stories
- Refugee testimonies
- Refugee narratives
- Personal stories refugees

SOME EXAMPLES OF TESTIMONIES (IF NEEDED):

Holocaust:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWpPTiGpsUg>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-9AWjOSnU0>

Breakup of Yugoslavia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15I6gVQLFwx>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Be3MTEmUu30>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbdjba1qHrM>

Syria:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDy8_8L3s0A
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QVmXX62_H0
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCJC_BeYhkw
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXuVxFLGpFM>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_btyYMCzlw

A comparison then and now

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTk7a1s8vR8>

Miscellaneous

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIDJar3Eo20>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ofmDh5u45s>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmoQfWJV1x0>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIJ_0x1q6l8
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BOGV3ung0Y>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bEK6gytwec>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnS7AKQGc4s>

Ukraine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4e5zIMgpbw>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YD_Etmv3Qm0
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CVphMH8Edw>



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